

Old Farmers' Market
W. Old St., River St., Rock St.
& Cockade Alley
Petersburg
Virginia

HABS No. VA-649

HABS
VA
27-PET,
26-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. VA-649

OLD FARMERS' MARKET

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VA
27-PET,
26-

Location: Bounded by West Old Street, River Street, Rock Street, and Cockade Alley, Petersburg, Virginia

Present Owner: City of Petersburg, City Hall, Petersburg, Virginia

Present Occupant: City of Petersburg

Present Use: Farmers' Market

Brief Statement of Significance: This octagonal building stands on land given to the Town of Petersburg in 1806 by Robert Bolling, an affluent early merchant, in trust, always to be used as a market site. Erected in 1878-1879, the present market building is the fourth to have been built on this site. Particularly noteworthy are the fine cast-iron roof brackets, wooden roof structural system, and corbeled brick at the cornice line.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1878-1879 (Record of Council, City of Petersburg, 1873-1880, p. 446, 499. Handwritten bound manuscripts in the City Council Clerk's Office, City Hall, Petersburg.)
2. Architect: Maj. B. J. Black. The following account of the design of the building is from an article entitled "The Proposed New Market House - Design Adopted by the Committee," which appeared in the August 1, 1878 issue of the Petersburg Index-Appeal:

"The special committee of the Council, appointed on the first of July, to report a plan and estimate of cost of a new market house to be erected on the Old Market Square, held a meeting at the courthouse last night. All the six members of the committee - one from each ward - were present, and some two hours

or more were consumed in the considering of the plans submitted for the building. Four plans were before the committee, viz:

"One prepared by Maj. Harrison Waite, of Petersburg; one by Mr. Alvert L. West, Architect, of Richmond; and two by Maj. B. J. Black, formerly of this city, but now of Richmond.

"The designs were all very neat and skillfully drawn, and a market house built in accordance with either, would prove a decided ornament.

"The plan which the committee favored, however and which was adopted was one of the two submitted by Maj. B. J. Black, of Richmond as follows:

"An octagon building - 80 feet from the south to the north entrance, and 80 feet from side to side, surrounded by a twelve feet (sic) shed running to the curb stone. This is known as the "Meat House." There are twenty butcher stalls in this building - running from one to sixteen around the inner side, with four about the centre. The design also includes a large refrigerator in the centre of the octagon, for the use of the butchers in keeping and preserving their meats. The meat stalls are so arranged that no one is more desirable than the others, but all possess equal advantages.

"Running north from the meat house is the hucksters' department - 46 feet long, with double stands conveniently arranged.

"At the end of the hucksters' department on the north side of the square is the fish house.

"Every portion of the square is utilized and an eye is had to comfort and convenience, combined with beauty of design.

"On the east side of the fish house is a building containing offices for the clerk of the market and keeper of the hay scales; and on the west side a building to be used as a restaurant.

"The committee will make their report to the Council, this afternoon."

3. Original and subsequent owners: Deed references for land follows. Deed Books are in the Clerk's Office of Hustings Court at Petersburg.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Grantor</u>	<u>Grantee</u>
1/3/1806 Book 3 page 275	Bolling, Robert	Town of Petersburg
8/1/1815 Book 8 page 323	Bolling, Robert Ann Dade	Town of Petersburg

4. Original plans and construction:

"The committee appointed by the Common Council to have the new market house erected, met yesterday afternoon, and awarded the contract for the building of the same to Mr. Herbert W. Williams of the city, at a cost of \$8,305, to be completed by the 5th of January, 1879. The building is to be erected on the site where the present Old Market house now stands. From the plans and specifications it will be a very handsome and imposing structure, as well as an ornament to that portion of the city." (The New Market House," Index-Appeal, Petersburg, September 28, 1878, p. 4., c. 2.)

"The contract for building the new market house on the Old Market square, as has been announced, has been awarded to Mr. H. W. Williams. The following description of the design of the improvement will be of interest to our readers:

"The meat market will be an octagon building eighty feet in diameter, located on the south side of the square - facing Old Street. The walls will be eighteen feet high and faced with sand stock brick. Each face of the octagon will have a semi-circular door, six feet wide and ten feet high. All the arches over the openings are to be turned with moulded, long arch bricks (oil stock). The eight pairs of sliding doors are hung at the top with eighteen inch hanging rollers, on iron track; and each door is to have two five-inch shears inserted at the bottom. On a wrought iron track, in the upper circular pannel of each door, will be an iron

grating for ventilation. Extending around the octagon building will be a twelve foot shed, supported by handsome wrought iron brackets, securely fastened to the side walls. This shed is intended for the exclusive use of the farmers.

"Over the shed there will be twenty-three semi-circular windows of six lights (10 x 16) hung on weights and cords, with clear, blue granite sills, and protected on the outside with five-eighth inch iron bars. The arches over the same are to be turned with moulded, short arch brick, (oil stock) with blue granite key stones. In the centre of the roof there will be a raised octagon lantern, six feet high and twenty-three feet six inches in diameter. Four sides of the lantern will have Louver frames and four sides glass. From the roof of the lantern will be a flag pole eighteen feet high, with turned ball on top eighteen inches in diameter.

"The interior of the meat market will contain sixteen butcher stalls, placed in eight angles of the octagon, two stalls in each angle, with segmented fronts, each stall having a frontage of about fourteen feet. The tops of counters are to be of one-inch polished marble. The partitions between the stalls are seven feet high. Up to the level of the counters the partitions will be wood; above the counters will be iron lattice work in wrought iron frames, twelve feet long and four feet high. There is ample room for the erection of four additional stalls, but the committee are undecided as yet whether they will build the extra stalls or utilize the space for other purposes.

"In the rear of the octagon building there is a shed seventy-six feet long, extending to the curb line on the north of the square, and 46 feet wide - supported on six inch iron columns, and designed for the accommodation of the hucksters and fish dealers. The portion next the meat market will have twenty-four tables, six feet six inches by three feet six inches, and the portion facing the South side depot will have fourteen fish benches three feet six inches by six feet six inches. The main avenue through this shed is twelve feet wide, and avenues on either side four feet wide. The entire length of the ground under cover, through the fish, huckster and meat markets, is one hundred and sixty-eight feet six inches.

"From the fish market west to the curb line is the saloon building, thirty-one feet six inches by eighteen feet, containing a dining room eighteen feet six inches by sixteen feet six inches, and a cook room eleven by eleven feet.

"From the fish market east to the curb line is a building of similar dimensions to the saloon. In this building are located the offices for the Clerk of the Market and Keeper of Hay Scales. These buildings will have segment-box windows, four lights (16 x 36) hung on weights and cords. These are to have pannelled and moulded shutters. All the window and door-sills are to be of blue granite. In the rear of the office of the Keeper of Hay Scales will be located the shed for the scales. The roof will be supported by iron columns eight inches in diameter. The roofs of the octagon building and the sheds are to be covered with L.C. charcoal tin, and are to be painted on the outside with two coats of metallic paint. The roofs of saloon, clerk's office and hay scales are to be covered with slate. All the wood work exposed to the weather is to be of heart lumber. Particular attention has been paid to having an abundance of light and a through ventilation in all the buildings. The buildings are to be completed by the 5th day of January, 1879." ("The New Market House," Index-Appeal, Petersburg, October 1, 1878, p. 4, c. 2.)

To H. W. Williams as per contract.....	\$8305.00
" H. W. Williams extra work.....	\$234.00
" Tappy & Steel Extra iron work.....	\$35.74
" C. C. Vincent Covering fish stalls with zinc.....	\$18.00
" Cook & Lawrence Painting.....	\$7.00
" Alex Cougdon Stone work.....	\$2.00
" J. B. Brady Gas fixtures.....	\$192.50
" B. J. Black Detail drawing.....	\$50.00
" Supervising Architect's fees.....	\$165.00
" Appomattox Iron Works.....	\$1.92
" A. A. Thomas & Co. Slate flagging.....	\$1945.96

(Record of Council, City of Petersburg, 1873-1880, p. 499.)

5. Alterations and additions: According to drawings seen in the City Engineers Office the building was remodeled 1952-1953.
6. Important old views: Published photograph in The Cockade City (Petersburg: Geo. W. Engelhardt, 1894), p. 24.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

This building is important because it is representative of the farm market which has been in existence on this site in Petersburg for over one hundred and fifty years.

Prepared by Randall J. Biallas
University of Illinois, Urbana
August, 1968

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION:

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The market was built in 1878 and is the fourth market to be built on the site. It is particularly significant for its octagon shape and the curved rosette pattern of the exterior cast-iron roof brackets, which are noteworthy for this time.
2. Condition of fabric: Good

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions and shape: The market is a one story, octagonal building, 32'8" on a side. A covered shed extends out from the north side a distance of 60' and is 30' wide. There are three bays on each side of the main building, consisting of two windows and a double door in the middle on alternate sides, with three windows in each of the other four sides.
2. Foundations: Unknown, inaccessible; but probably concrete.
3. Wall construction: orange brick, natural finish.
4. Chimneys: There are four sets of Georgian clay tile chimney pots at alternate corners of the roof. They rise about 3' above the lower roof edge.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: There are four double doors in alternate walls. Originally there were doors in all walls, but some were removed and replaced by windows in the remodeling of 1952. There is a large arch above each door with the opening below the arch having been boarded up.

- b. Windows: There are windows or openings on three levels in the building. Those at the ground level are similar to the doors in general size and shape. They are large double windows framed by two small arches and these in turn are set in, and tangent to, a larger arch. The windows do not open. The four windows that were added in the remodeling are identical to the older ones. In the clerestory, above the canopy roof are smaller arched windows that were bricked in during the 1952 remodeling. On the lantern at the top of the roof are louvered openings.
- 6. Structural system:
 - a. Walls: Masonry bearing:
 - b. Columns: At each corner on the exterior walls are pipe columns and on the interior there are eight pipe columns (forming an octagonal shape). Each is on a line radiating from the center. The columns and brick walls, in turn, support a trussed superstructure spanning the open space of the market floor. The covered shed is supported by eight columns, four on each side.
- 7. Roof shape and covering: The roof of the main building reflects the octagonal shape and slopes upward to a lantern, also octagon shaped and approximately 6' on a side, which caps the main roof. The lantern roof also slopes up, reflecting the shape of the octagon. The covered shed has a gabled roof. All roof material is tin (ribs are 18" to 21" o. c.) and the gutters are built into the roof.
- 8. Cornice: The cornice is of moulded wood with an ogee curve. Directly below it are corbeled brick in an undulating pattern which project out 5" from the exterior wall.
- 9. Brackets: The cast-iron brackets which support the canopy roof and help to support the covered shed are one of the most striking features of the building. They are triangular shaped with a flowered rosette pattern in the middle.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plan: There is one large open interior space. One temporary room attached to one wall and a 12' x 15'

restrooms area are attached to the exterior wall on the north side.

2. Stairways: None.
3. Flooring: Concrete overlaid with asphalt tile.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: A 4' ceramic tile wainscot extends around the entire wall with 3/4" painted plaster finish above, extending to the ceiling. The ceiling of plaster on metal lath has been suspended 1' below trusses except for center portion over the columns where it is dropped six additional feet below the bottom truss cords. The ceiling was lowered in the remodeling of 1952.
5. Doorways and doors: None significant.
6. Lighting: Modern.
7. Heating: None. Chimneys once served as vents for coal or oil stoves.

D. Site and Surroundings:

1. Orientation and general setting: Octagonal in shape, the building has no real front. It is surrounded on all sides by streets, thus giving an openness to the total site. There are no outbuildings.
2. Landscaping and walks: Concrete walks surround the building, extending out to the street. Originally these walkswwere slate.

Prepared by John M. McRae
Project Supervisor
July, 1968.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records are part of the documentation made during the 1968 Petersburg Summer Project, undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with The Historic Petersburg Foundation, Inc., with financial assistance from The Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission. During the summer, records were made of twenty-two buildings in the city.

The project was under the general direction of James C. Massey, Chief, Historic American Buildings Survey. Project Supervisor was John M. McRae of the University of Florida. The recording team was composed of Randall J. Biallas, historian (University of Illinois, Urbana), and student assistant architects Michael Hamilton (University of Arizona), Thomas J. Sanford (Washington State University), and Edwin S. Smith, Jr. (Rhode Island School of Design). Photographs were made by George Eisenman.